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PSYCHOLOGIST NOTES DEVELOPMENT OF RIOT IDEOLOGY AMONG URBAN NEGROES

BEVERLY HILLS: Urban riots in northern cities will continue until the well of available cities runs dry, writes a research psychologist with the Office of Economic Opportunity. "They will continue" he claims, "because the mood of many Negroes in the urban North demands them, because there is a quasi-political ideology which justifies them, and because there is no presently effective deterrent or antidote."

The researcher, T. M. TOMLINSON, formerly Professor of Psychology at UCLA, was writing in a special issue devoted to urban violence of The AMERICAN BEHAVIORAL SCIENTIST, a research-oriented journal in the social sciences. His article, entitled "The Development of a Riot Ideology Among Urban Negroes," analyzes the Los Angeles Riot Study conducted by UCLA and is aimed at weighing the degree of militance and riot ideology created in city ghettos throughout the USA as a result of last summer's rioting.

The author based his research on interviews of a sample 585 Negroes residing in the riot curfew area of Watts. He reveals that "a sort of simplified riot ideology has taken form" in Los Angeles and in the northern cities which suffered riots last summer, notably Detroit. Riots today, Tomlinson says, have assumed the shape of a popular movement, and support for the purpose of the riots characterizes a large segment of the Negro population.

"Within this segment are imbedded a group of sophisticated, activist young people who have provided the riot with political interpretations of pur-

pose. They have created a riot ideology, and this ideology has infected the thinking of other less sophisticated but equally disaffected individuals," Tomlinson writes.

As a consequence of this ideology, there is the implication that nothing can be done to stem the tide of urban disorders until they run their course. As the author points out, "there are no immediate responses within the repertoire of any agency or person which are sufficient to expunge the outrage that gives birth to Negro violence, except the Negroes' own fear of the burning and killing, and that comes only after the riot has occurred." He claims the aim of first non-repressive methods such as the War on Poverty and investigative techniques such as the Commission on Civil Disorders are evasive and are only directed at warding off more riots rather than alleviating the causes and conditions that nurture riots.

Finally he argues that repressive measures such as police or national guard counter-violence exert "no deterrent effect" and can only be effective "once a riot has started." He continues, "and so popular riots will continue and nothing of significant worth will have been done to relieve their causes. And, because nothing is being done now to alter the situation, the future is bleak."

Tomlinson, while at UCLA, was a member of the Interdisciplinary Los Angeles Riot Study research team and co-authored two of the reports, "Negro Attitudes Toward the Riot" and "Method: Negro Reaction Survey." The special issue of ABS in which his article appears, entitled "Urban Violence and Disorder" is available at \$3.50 a copy from Sage Publications, Inc., 275 South Beverly Drive, Beverly Hills, California 90212. Quantity rates are available for educational institutions and for bulk orders.